

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A server reservation method whereby a user terminal apparatus makes a reservation for the use of a processing server that performs predetermined processing to a reservation control apparatus that controls the reservation state of said processing server via a network in order for said user terminal apparatus to use the functions of said processing server by accessing said processing server via the network, said server reservation method comprising:

a reservation requesting step of sending reservation request information including a desired service time to use said processing server from said user terminal apparatus to said reservation control apparatus via the network;

a permission notifying step of transmitting, when the reservation for the use of said processing server during said desired service time included in said reservation request information is accepted, the permission notification information to notify that the reservation is accepted, to said user terminal apparatus via the network;

a reconfirming step of transmitting reconfirmation information for said accepted reservation, from said user terminal apparatus to said reservation control apparatus via the network; and

a reservation confirming step of confirming said reservation when said reservation control apparatus receives said

reconfirmation information sent from said user terminal apparatus, by a predetermined time before said desired service time, and of canceling said reservation when said reservation control apparatus does not receive said reconfirmation information by a predetermined time before said desired service time.

2. The server reservation method according to Claim 1, further comprising

a billing step of performing billing processing related to said reservation when the reservation is confirmed in said reservation confirming step.

3. The server reservation method according to Claim 1, wherein said predetermined processing executed by said processing server is processing of distributing content data by streaming to the requesting client terminal apparatus via the network.

4. The server reservation method according to Claim 1, wherein said permission notifying step does not permit said reservation when the total time of reservations by the user of said user terminal apparatus during a predetermined period exceeds a preset time.

5. A reservation control apparatus for controlling reservations for the use of a processing server that carries out predetermined

processing in order for a user terminal apparatus to use the functions of said processing server by accessing said processing server via a network, said reservation control apparatus comprising:

receiving means for receiving reservation request information including a desired service time to use said processing server supplied from said user terminal apparatus via the network;

permission notifying means for sending, when the reservation for the use of said processing server during said desired service time included in said reservation request information is accepted, permission notification information to notify that the reservation is accepted, to said user terminal apparatus via the network;

reconfirmation information receiving means for receiving the reconfirmation information for said accepted reservation sent from said user terminal apparatus via the network; and

reservation confirming means for confirming said reservation when said reconfirmation information is received by a predetermined time before said desired service time, and for canceling said reservation when said reconfirmation information is not received by a predetermined time before said desired service time.

6. The reservation control apparatus according to Claim 5, further comprising

billing means for carrying out billing processing related to said reservation when the reservation is confirmed by said reservation confirming means.

7. The reservation control apparatus according to Claim 5, further comprising

reservation permission judging means for judging whether the total reservation time by the user of said user terminal apparatus during a preset period exceeds the preset time and for rejecting said reservation when the total reservation time by the user of said user terminal apparatus during a preset period exceeds the preset time.

8. A program storage medium storing a program to be executed by a reservation control apparatus that controls reservations for the use of a processing server that carries out predetermined processing in order for a user terminal apparatus to use the functions of said processing server by accessing said processing server via a network, said program comprising:

reception processing of receiving reservation request information including a desired service time to use said processing server supplied from said user terminal apparatus via the network;

permission notification processing of sending, when the reservation for the use of said processing server during said

desired service time included in said reservation request information is accepted, permission notification information to notify that the reservation is accepted, to said user terminal apparatus via the network;

reconfirmation information reception processing of receiving the reconfirmation information for said accepted reservation sent from said user terminal apparatus via the network; and

reservation confirmation processing of confirming said reservation when said reconfirmation information is received by a predetermined time before said desired service time, and of canceling said reservation when said reconfirmation information is not received by a predetermined time before said desired service time.